



Ranger-Led Activities — Winter 2005 through Spring 2006

Join a Big Cypress ranger, or volunteer, for *FREE* programs that explore the wonders of the Big Cypress Swamp and the Everglades ecosystem. For details on activities, or to make reservations, call (239) 695-1201. Reservations are accepted up to 14 days in advance of the activity date. Programs begin December 26, 2005 and go through mid-April, 2006.

Big Cypress Activities		S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<b>“What’s that, Ranger?”</b> Daily at 2:00 p.m., 30-minutes. Join a Ranger or a Big Cypress volunteer at H. P. Williams picnic area for a talk on the natural variety that can be discovered within the Big Cypress Swamp. A spotting scope will be available to get a close-up look at alligators and a variety of birds. No reservations required. Wheelchair accessible.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Kirby Storter Boardwalk Strolls</b> Thursday through Saturday at 2:00 p.m., one-hour. Explore a variety of habitats, and venture into the heart of a cypress strand during this one mile leisurely stroll along the Kirby Storter Boardwalk. Bring binoculars, water and insect repellent. Meet at the boardwalk parking area on US 41. No reservations required. Wheelchair accessible.						X	X	X
<b>Canoe Trips</b> Saturdays and Sundays at 9:30 a.m., 4 to 5 hours. We’ll provide canoes and equipment or you may bring your own. These trips vary by weather, water level, tide and ranger’s choice of location and duration. Knowing canoeing basics is helpful. Limited to 10 canoes. Reservations required.		X						X
<b>Swamp Walks</b> Sundays and Mondays at 1:30 p.m., approximately 2 hours long. Discover what’s out there! This is a great way to experience the swamp! Cypress knees and sawgrass make long pants necessary. Wear sturdy shoes that you can get wet and muddy. Bring a change of clothes, including shoes, for your ride home. Reservations required. Meet at Oasis Visitor Center.		X	X					
<b>Campfire Programs</b> Fridays and Saturdays at 7:00 p.m., starting January 6th, 1 hour. Programs on Friday will be presented at Monument Lake and Midway Campgrounds. Saturday program at Midway only. Find out more about the natural and cultural history of the region . Bring a lawn chair and insect repellent. No reservations required.							X	X
<b>Deep Lake or Gator Hook Hike</b> Saturdays at 1:00 p.m. 2 to 3 hours. Programs conducted weekly, location changes on alternate weeks, call the visitor center for details on where to meet. Deep Lake is one of the few natural lakes south of Lake Okeechobee, and a definite wildlife hotspot. Gator Hook Strand provides an opportunity to see some of the unique plants deep in the swamp. Be prepared to get wet. Reservations required. Begins 1/14/06 with Deep Lake Hike.								X

Due to unforeseen circumstances this schedule is subject to change.  
This document was printed through the generous support of the Everglades Association, Friends of Big Cypress National Preserve and visitor donations.



## Activities On Your Own

There are many opportunities to explore Big Cypress National Preserve on your own or with your friends. For details on various activities stop by the Oasis Visitor Center and ask rangers for further information on access into the preserve. You may also visit our website at [www.nps.gov/bicy](http://www.nps.gov/bicy) for further details.

### Safety First

When traveling in Big Cypress National Preserve whether by car, foot, canoe, or off-road vehicle, always let someone know where you are going. Don't forget, if you are entering at one of the backcountry access points to be sure to fill out the backcountry permit. To enjoy your visit be prepared by bringing water, insect repellent, sturdy shoes, protection from the sun, and food. Always be aware of your surroundings and respectful of the wildlife.

### Wildlife Viewing

The preserve supplies a brilliant space to view a wide spectrum of wildlife. From a multitude of bird life to the impressive alligator, it is even possible to catch a glimpse of the endangered Florida panther. Please observe wildlife respectfully and never attempt to feed or approach! Wildlife observation platforms can be found at H. P. Williams Picnic Area — at the corner of U. S. 41 (Tamiami Trail) and the Turner River Road, and at the Oasis Visitor Center.

### Driving

Excellent prospects for wildlife watching by car can be found off of the Tamiami Trail on the scenic Loop Road or Turner River/Birdon Road loop. These gravel roads offer a passage for the patient observer for seeing the preserve's animal life and multitude of subtropical habitats. You can help protect wildlife by observing the speed limit on all roads. Refer to the preserve map, or visit the visitor center for detailed locations of roads.

### Walking

Kirby Storter Boardwalk is a one mile round trip adventure located off U.S. 41. Recommended year round, the trail offers an opportunity to become submerged into a beautiful cypress strand. Approximately half way along Loop Road is another short walk called Tree Snail Hammock Trail. This shady nature walk allows you to explore the mysteries of a tropical hardwood hammock in the southern portion of the preserve.

### Hiking

The Florida National Scenic Trail runs from North to South through the heart of Big Cypress. This trail, over forty miles long, presents excellent backpacking opportunities. Fire Prairie Trail is five miles round trip and is found off of the northern end of Turner River Road. The trail provides superb views of several of South Florida's habitats. Areas designated in the preserve for off road vehicles are also available to explorers on foot, but hikers need to safely give way to the off road vehicles when necessary.

### Canoeing

Wander the waters of Big Cypress by bringing your own canoe or kayak, or renting them within nearby communities. The access for Turner River Canoe Trail is located along U.S. 41. Halfway Creek Canoe Trail offers another option and the ramp is also located off of U.S. 41 at the end of Seagrape Drive by the preserve's headquarters. Typical canoe trips in the area will take a minimum of two to three hours.

### Biking

Within the preserve, many of the gravel roads off from the Tamiami Trail, and several of the off-road vehicle trails, provide opportunities for exploration by bicycle. The Bear Island Grade, accessible from State Road 29, is a popular route. While biking in the preserve please be aware of traffic. While on backcountry trails yield to hikers and ORVs. For more details on biking opportunities speak to a ranger at the Oasis Visitor Center.

The Oasis Visitor Center in Big Cypress National Preserve is located mid-way between Naples and Miami on the Tamiami Trail (Hwy 41). Hours of operation: 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. daily. Closed December 25th. For an introduction to Big Cypress National Preserve, a 15 minute movie, *The Living Waters of Big Cypress*, is available for viewing. Also located at Oasis is a boardwalk for wildlife viewing and there is access to the Florida National Scenic Trail.